TOWN & COUNTRY CHURCH

In This Issue

A well known operator of a dairy farm in New Jersey, also the director of rural church work of the Board of National Missions, Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., Dr. Randolph again gives one of his interesting and comprehensive statements on rural church statesmanship, Page 1.

Warren H. Wilson was the "dean" of those who administer denominational church programs. His pioneering work is described on Page 3 by Bristol Chatterton.

In Copenhagen they have erected a beautiful parish church in memory of the founder of the folk high schools of Denmark, Bishop Grundtvig. He was also a hymn writer, philosopher, and theologian. A travel narrative by the Editor appears on Page 5.

B. L. Hummel, Disciples layman, extension specialist in Virginia, gives impressions of Rural Western Europe on Page 7.

Sixteen Ohio rural pastors have won awards by an interesting method, described on Page 10 by Earl W. McMunn of the *Ohio Farmer*.

Run over the Index on Pages 12-14 for an idea of the scope of the material appearing in this paper in 1950.

Book Reviews—Page 15.

No. 66
December, 1950

Thy Kingdom Come in Rural America

HENRY S. RANDOLPH

• One of the greatest imperatives in church statesmanship today is an enlarged and intensified program for the rural church. Our churches are now facing a rare opportunity to move into every rural community of America with a creative program with which to present the Christian Gospel in its fullness, making it functional as a cohesive force in every area and interest of human life. This new program for the rural church should provide for the development and integration of human personality, decision, and commitment to the Christian way of life, Christian worship, Christian education, Christian fellowship and recreation, rural health, the home and family life, rural art, literature and dramatics, labor and economics.

It is important to note that we already have the basic elements for this sort of action—we have the Gospel of our Lord, we have the people, we have the churches, and we have a method of successful work. The rural people of America await our coming. Listen to their song—twenty-seven million farm voices, thirty million non-farm voices, and mingled with these the cry of the majority of the nation's youth and children. It is a great national chorus rising out of hearts with a sense of spiritual poverty and neglect. If the church is to take advantage of its present opportunities in rural America and to do its duty under God and the great commission of our Lord, it must give intelligent, creative and unrelenting support to this great task.

New Parish Organization

Many of our churches located in town and country areas were organized decades or even centuries ago, some in the eastern states dating back to the seventeenth century. Undoubtedly most of these churches met the need of their day—but that day is long past. In all too many instances we are trying to operate our rural churches throughout the nation on a pattern developed during the horse and buggy era. That pattern does not meet the needs of our motorized age.

Good roads and high-powered automobiles have radically altered the pattern of rural social organization. At the time when many of our town and country churches were organized, rural life centered around the small neighborhood church and one-room schoolhouse. Now rural people in most parts of our country do their shopping and their banking in nearby towns and cities. They send their children to consolidated schools. They attend meetings of civic, social, agricultural, patriotic and fraternal organizations at the county seat or some other sizeable town. The rural community is expanding.

During the time that the rural community has been stretching out its boundaries, the cost of living in America has risen. Once upon a time a rural pastor could be secured for a few hundred dollars a year in cash, a house and garden space, and gifts of meat, poultry, eggs, fruit, vegetables, and other goods. Now a rural minister must buy food, clothes, education, and health services at the prevailing rates. Not only does a minister require a larger salary than formerly, but the cost of other features of a rural church program have increased proportionately.

There are values, however, inherent in the old neighborhood church which we cannot afford to lose. These values include the ties

of kinship and friendship in a small, closely knit group; a spirit of neighborliness and mutual helpfulness; and a sense of community. In order to conserve these neighborhood values and at the same time to meet the needs of today's enlarged rural community and to provide the financial support necessary for a modern church ministry and program, the larger or cooperative parish has evolved.

Larger Parish Plan

The larger or cooperative parish is a very simple form of church organization. Two or more rural churches form themselves into a parish, either on a denominational or interdenominational basis. They elect a parish council with equal representation from each of the churches. They join in calling a minister. By pooling their resources for ministerial support, they are often able to afford a diversified and multiple ministry; for example, a pastor, a minister of music, and a director of religious education. This not only provides the parish with leaders having diversified training and talents, but in many cases it permits the employment of lay workers, such as women trained in religious education. This is an advantage in view of the relative scarcity of seminary-trained, ordained ministers.

The churches making up the larger parish retain their congregational entities and function as separate churches on the neighborhood level. For example, they maintain their own buildings, care for their church grounds, send in their benevolences, and continue the activities and programs which are of concern to the particular church rather than to the parish as a whole. On the level of the larger community or parish, the churches cooperate in such projects as the calling and maintenance of the ministry, young people's work, the purchase and use of audio-visual aids and other equipment, entertaining missionary and other parish visitors, etc.

Each larger parish is free to work out for itself the activities which should be continued on a neighborhood basis and those which can be more efficiently handled by the parish as a whole on a larger community basis. Those activities which are assigned to the larger parish should be supervised and put into effect by the Larger Parish Council.

Adequate Buildings and Equipment

Most of our rural churches were built more than fifty years ago and have changed but little either in structure or location since then. The typical rural church is a one-room building. It usually has more pew space than its attendance at public worship requires, but it makes no provision for a modern program of Christian education, nor does it make any concession to the social and community outreach programs of the church. Its location is frequently off center in terms of contemporary community development, and it may be inaccessible from the point of view of transportation and good roads. The time has come for a program of rural church remodeling and rebuilding.

Such a program for rural church rebuilding should certainly include the manse. Some of the turn-over in the ministry of the rural church might be avoided if the manse were designed for efficient and comfortable living and attractive in appearance.

Specialized Training

It is a well-known fact that the rural church suffers at the point of ministerial tenure. All too frequently the rural church is regarded as a base for a beginning minister. Without any specialized training for rural work, a young minister will accept a small town or country church just to gain sufficient experience to entitle him to the urban church for which he was trained and which will afford him a better salary and more comfortable living arrangements. There must be an end to this practice of regarding the rural church as merely a stepping-stone to the urban church. If rural churches are to be strong, if they are to have a vital effect on their communities, they must be provided with continuous and well-qualified ministerial leadership. This is being done in some places, and it can and must be done on a much broader scale.

The first step is to provide specialized rural training at the seminary level for young men who show an interest in the rural field. These students should be given a thorough understanding of modern rural life and culture, as well as the usual theological and Biblical studies.

It is therefore imperative that rural churches prepare themselves to offer living and working conditions which will attract and hold these young men with specialized training. This the rural churches can do by more careful planning, better stewardship, or in some cases reorganization into larger parishes. They must be prepared to offer their minister a comfortable, modern home with a plot of ground for gardening and subsistence farming; a mileage grant to cover the cost of travel on the field and depreciation of the car; pension provision; a salary comparable to that of the non-rural minister; and above all, a parish which will challenge a young man dedicated to a creative rural ministry.

A Plea For Church Unity

The church should be a cohesive force, giving the people "a consciousness of kind," binding them together into a creative working power for community enrichment, and giving inspiration to achieve these objectives. It must further Christian neighborliness in the rural community and must provide the dynamic that makes rural people want to translate beliefs and convictions into daily living and relationships.

The rural church at its best has concerned itself with the total life of the people, recognizing that we are in a stream of changing rural society and that the church must address itself not only to saving the individual's soul but to saving the community—"better farming, better business, and better living for my neighbor and myself."

Therefore, if town and country churches are to do the work of God in the community, there must be an increasing measure of interdenomi

ational unity throughout rural merica. The spiritual welfare of ne people must outweigh vested de-ominational interests. In every ural community there should be ne, and only one, strong, well quipped and well staffed evangeli-al church of some denomination or n acceptable cooperative church rogram, of which the people are roud and which they have a will o support.

May Thy Kingdom come and Thy Vill be done throughout rural merica!

From an address by Dr. Randolph to the Rural Church Institute, Ithaca, N. Y. Dr. Randolph is Director of the Unit of Rural Work, Board of National Missions, Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.)

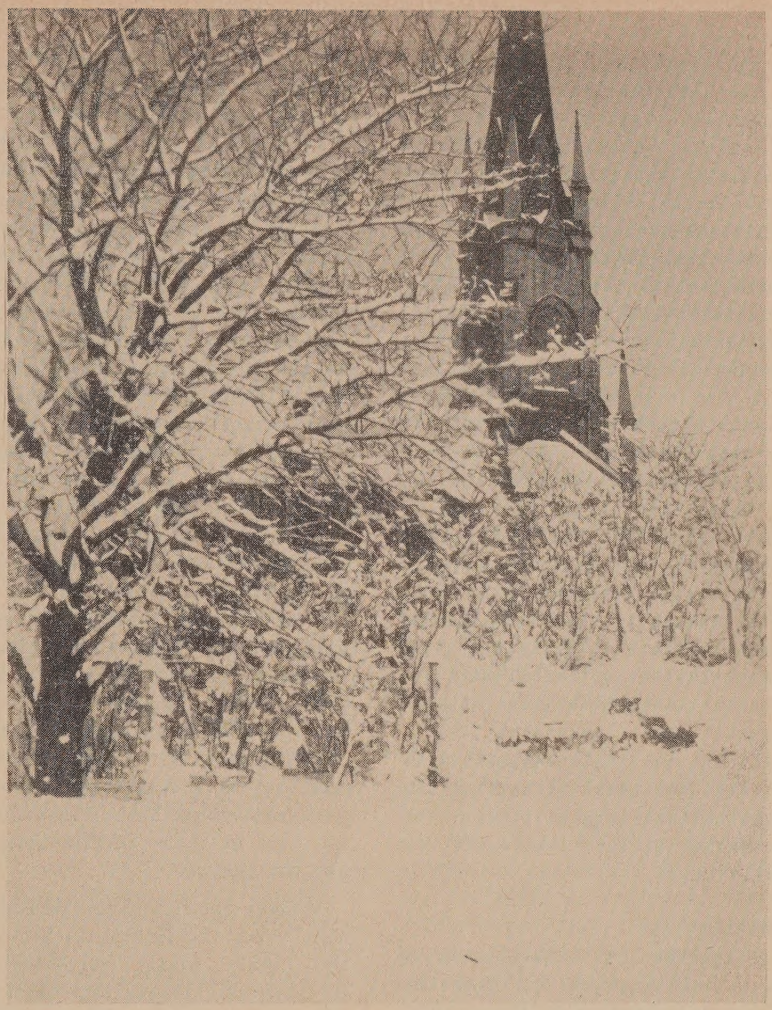
Baptist Rural Church Center

The Northern Baptist Assembly naintains Rural Church Center at Green Lake, Wisconsin, for in-ervice training of ministers, minis-ers' wives, missionaries and rural hurch leaders. Those who attend ind fellowship with God and their ellow men, and return to their par-shes with enlarged vision of the Christian ministry. Here they learn now to approach the task of Chris-ian leadership, study the Bible, vorship, and secure information concerning the rural church and ural community.

Rural Church Center comprises our buildings. The buildings are ocated in the northwestern corner of the Northern Baptist Assembly grounds, about three miles west of he village of Green Lake.

More About Visual Aids

• Ralph Grieser, Methodist minis-er of Polo, Ill., tells how and why "The Country Church Can Afford Visual Aids" in a recent issue of *Church Management,* Cleveland, Ohio. Methods of raising money to purchase the basic equipment are given, as well as the many uses of visual aids in religious education.



Religious News Service Photograph

Warren Hugh Wilson—Rural Church Pioneer*

BRISTOL CHATTERTON

• Warren Hugh Wilson, America's foremost rural church pioneer, was born May 1, 1867, in the small community of Tidioute, Warren County, Pennsylvania. He was educated at local schools, Oberlin College and Union Theological Seminary.

Warren Wilson's rural pioneering began in the little hamlet of Quaker Hill, north of New York City, close to the Connecticut line, and but a few miles from where he is now buried. There he was minister of a church serving people from several denominations.

After five years at Quaker Hill, Wilson was called to be minister of the Arlington Avenue Presbyterian Church in Brooklyn, N. Y. While pastor of this city church he studied at Columbia University and earned his Ph.D. degree in 1908. Professor Franklin H. Giddings, under whom he studied, persuaded him to make a sociological survey and study of Quaker Hill, which he used as his dissertation for his degree. This was one of the first studies in the sociology of rural life in America.

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* From a radio address, given over Station WGY, Schenectady, N. Y.

National Influence

From 1908 until he died, March 2, 1937, Warren Wilson served his church and country as Superintendent of the Department of Church and Country Life of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. During these last twenty-seven years of his life, he extended his pioneering survey on a nation-wide scale. He conducted rural surveys all over America, set up summer schools for rural pastors, organized Demonstration Parishes to show the most efficient methods of country church work, taught classes in rural sociology at Teachers College, Columbia University, and lectured on the Rural Church at Union Theological Seminary.

Wilson pioneered in making people—common people, church dignitaries, students, everyone who would listen—aware that the Rural Church is an important part of country life, and that country life is our nation's glory.

He was one of the original members of the rural section of the American Sociological Society and the author of several books on the rural church.

Instructor

As teacher, Dr. Wilson gathered about him a group of young theological students and sent them forth to make a series of social and religious surveys in a dozen states. These surveys formed the first comprehensive sociological surveys of rural life conducted in this country. Some of the men who worked on these surveys have become leaders in church work, including Hermann N. Morse, Administrative Secretary of the Board of National Missions of the Presbyterian Church; Ralph A. Felton, Professor of Rural Sociology in Drew Theological Seminary; E. Fred Eastman of Chicago Theological Seminary.

Every move Warren Wilson made was a pioneering one because no man had gone before to show the way. He was the first to promote special summer schools designed for rural pastors. These schools were held in many parts of the nation—at theological seminaries, and especially at colleges of agriculture.

Demonstration Parish

Another pioneering venture was the Demonstration Parish. Warren Wilson was deeply convinced that the country church needs a resident pastor. Here is a quotation from his annual report of 1917:

"The country community needs a resident pastor. It is better for the minister who preaches in the country to live in the country. The minister to country people should know the daily round of country life. Religion can never be embodied in a sermon; and when religion becomes limited to a formal act it is tinged with suspicion in the eyes of most men. Sermons and funerals and weddings become to country people the windows by which religion flies out of every-day life. What religion the farmer has grows out of his yearly struggle with the soil and with the elements. His belief in God is a belief in Providence. His God is the Creator of the sun and the seasons, the wind and the rain. The man who does not with him share these experiences cannot long interpret them for him in terms of the Scripture and the church."

Wilson got the term "demonstration" from the Extension Service of the United States Department of Agriculture. He was impressed with the success of its "demonstration method," and became convinced that this method would prove equally profitable in the reconstruction of rural church and community life. In many parts of the nation these parishes were set up to demonstrate how a rural church, with capable leadership, could be a force for good in a community. These parishes were forerunners of the Larger Parish, which is a plan of having several churches in an area work together under specialized leadership to promote a strong program of worship, education, and recreation.

The Country Church

Another feature of Warren Wilson's pioneering in the rural church was the training of students for the ministry at Union Theological Seminary in the understanding of what the country church is and what it ought to be. To this I can give per sonal testimony:

As a student of theology in 193 I found in Dr. Wilson's course o The Rural Church the answer t what I had been looking for. All m life I had lived in small places an attended small churches. Here wa a man who understood small church es, knew what to do with them, ha plans for their good. More than that he was enthusiastic about smal churches when most men looke upon them with pity and contempt He loved the country and the coun try people, and his exuberance wa contagious. His enthusiasm was bal anced by a thorough knowledge o his subject. He knew rural churche all over the nation. He knew th economic problems of the farmer He knew the history of country lif —ancient, recent, contemporary.

For the first time in my seminar study I found a cause to which t dedicate my life—the rural church When the problem of a graduatio thesis came up, I chose to writ about The Larger Parish under Dr Wilson's direction. Working wit him on the thesis, I got to kno Warren H. Wilson, not only as scholar, but also as a friend.

I hope I have shared with you a insight into the character an achievement of Warren Wilson as rural church pioneer. He coul make a thorough study of the rura church by conferences, surveys, ob servation; then he could set up Dem onstration Parishes to show how church could help develop com munity life; and then he could in struct and inspire preachers an laymen on the field, as well as youn men training for the ministry. H became the "dean" of the whol group of rural church administra tors.

You and I who live and work i the country owe a debt to this rur church pioneer. Warren Hugh Wi son's service to the country churc and the country life of our natio has lasting and far-reaching result

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What a man does for himself di with him. What he does for his com munity lives long after he has gon —Theodore Roosevelt

Town & Country Church

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Grundtvig's Church

BENSON Y. LANDIS

• In Copenhagen there has been erected during recent years a parish church as a memorial to N. F. S. Grundtvig (1783-1872), a bishop of the Danish Church, who was the founder of the folk schools that have influenced the rural and general life of Denmark in a significant way for many years. From one-fourth to one-third of the men and women living in rural communities have gone to the folk schools.

At the folk high schools young men and women submit to no academic entrance requirements. They also take no examinations and receive no credits. They live with teachers who emphasize the living word, and hold before themselves Grundtvig's aim of "enlivement." They study history in order to understand their own situation and also how to participate in their own time. They also study culture, literature, economics.

Although the technique of economic cooperation is not taught as such, it is everywhere recognized that these schools have encouraged the formation of Denmark's great cooperatives, both directly and indirectly. For the young men and women learn how to live together and they themselves take naturally to economic cooperation. It is said that most of the officers of cooperatives have attended the folk high schools. The schools are still well attended.

The Parish Church

A pamphlet distributed at the Grundtvig's Church contains valuable information concerning the beautiful and relatively new brick structure. Georg-Albert With describes the building. Only a few years after Grundtvig's death there was discussion of a memorial, but plans did not mature until the 20th century. The usual suggestions for a statue were not followed.

A public competition was announced and the noted architect, P. V. Jensen Flint, submitted a design for a local church. It was accepted, and a model made. World War I halted plans, but the Danish State then voted funds and the city of Copenhagen offered land. It was decided to erect the church in a new and growing section of Copenhagen where a parish church was needed.

Unconventional Design

Jensen Flint, the architect, submitted an unconventional design by which he wished to express the type of memorial needed, but he did not expect it to be accepted. To his surprise, his pessimism proved to be wrong, and the ambitious scheme for a large, all-brick building with the front appearing as an organ, was soon being implemented.

The cornerstone was laid on Grundtvig's birthday in 1921, and the tower was consecrated as a provisional church in 1927. Only in 1940 was the entire building opened. It is still not completed, because there are no funds for adequate lighting. Nevertheless, it is used for church services and for many other meetings of the people of the parish.

The consecration of the church also took place on Grundtvig's birthday in 1940, which came a few months after the German legions marched into Denmark to occupy the country.

The Hymn Writer

Grundtvig was a great hymn writer and many of his works are in the hymnal of the Danish Church and constantly used. Thus the front of the tower, appearing as an organ, is an appropriate memorial to the hymn writer. The church is called "late Danish brick-work Gothic." The tower is in some respects like most of Denmark's 2,000 churches which have step-gabled towers. The little country churches are mostly white.

The Grundtvig's Church is of "yellow white, handformed, standard-size brick." The brick is used

for walls, pillars, vaults, stairs, floors, altar and pulpit. It appears that only the organ and the windows are not brick and mortar. The surfaces were carefully polished.

"Only a chosen few bricklayers took part in the work, and most of them were engaged right from the laying of the foundation stone until the completion, so that the five to six million bricks which were used have passed through the hands of the same few men."

The church seats almost 2,000 persons. It is situated on a tract of land relatively high above sea level. The tower is 160 feet high, and is visible for miles around.

The Religious Teacher

Grundtvig, the religious teacher, is described in the same pamphlet by Jens Jelsbak. The great teacher who still teaches both the people of Denmark and other peoples of the North was born at the parsonage of Udby in South Zealand in 1783 and died when pastor of the Vartov Hospital in Copenhagen in 1872. His father was a clergyman for fifty years. When a young man, Grundtvig was influenced by the spirit of rationalism. It was a cousin, Henrik Steffens, a teacher at the University of Copenhagen, who talked to him about the life of the heart.

Grundtvig preached his first sermon on the subject, "Why has the Lord disappeared from His house?" "He preached an austere scriptural Christianity. . . ." At first he was a curate to his own father. Through the sacraments of the church "we hear the word of the Lord." The Apostles' Creed became for him the rule of interpretation of the Scripture—"the word from the Lord's own mouth." These ideas motivated the man who stimulated "an enlightenment the like of which is not to be found in any other people. All his hymn writing must be viewed in this light or it cannot be fully understood," writes Jelsbak.

What is Culture?

Grundtvig also mightily contributed to Danish culture in its deepest and broadest sense. The basis of his cultural views is his Christian view of man. In a poem he once wrote, "What are we, I wonder, we mixtures strange, of light and clay. . . ."

Oluf Olsen interprets these cultural views, somewhat difficult to consider in the English language in the same way as in the Danish. Grundtvig himself coined a word "folkelig," for which the best translation seems to be "cultural."

Olsen quotes Peter Manniche of the International Peoples College in an explanation: "'Det folkelige' meant to Grundtvig not merely 'popular' in opposition to 'aristocratic,' not merely 'democratic' or 'national' in a purely political sense. It signified the conscious fellowship of a people united around its historic and spiritual values."

Olsen then goes on to observe that Grundtvig "knew that only a human-cultural awakening can prepare the soil for the Gospel."

Parents and Folk Schools

To implement this cultural awakening, Grundtvig promoted a small informal circle of parents and little children, to "insure the most intimate connection between home and school." In this circle, history is to be taught, not as in formal schools, but in the form of stories that stir the imagination, the narratives of the life and work of noble forefathers, including what is known as mythology.

Next came the folk high schools for the young adults or older youth. These aimed not at vocational training, but at spiritual ripening. Here history is again the means, to help "people realize their existence as human beings." Consequently to Grundtvig culture "becomes a fundamental thing in the life of every individual."

Practical Citizenship

But what has this to do with practical citizenship? Everything in the world. Grundtvig's teachings went to the heart of the social crisis which has been everywhere agitating the minds of men. For it was Grundtvig who wrote the famous words, many times quoted in various forms:

"And so of our riches we
truly can vaunt,
When few have too much,
with still fewer in want."

These ideas went out into the arenas of economic groups and politics. They served as slogans for those who created a social democracy in government and an economic democracy through cooperatives. The transformations in social life are particularly to be seen in the peasantry. A hundred years ago the Danish peasantry were living in abject poverty, a condition regarded as hopeless by many. The peasantry first began to stir in response to the ideas of Bishop Grundtvig. Through the efforts of the Bishop and his coworkers to bring about a spiritual awakening "the conditions were created in the rural population of Denmark for the immense economic and political development and emancipation."

The Ultimate Aim

From the life and work of this Bishop, "the spiritual stream issued that flowed out over our country giving birth to a popular development which utterly reformed the whole people."

Yet all this great cultural renaissance was to the great Bishop perhaps only an "incidental circumstance" writes Olsen. Grundtvig wished for his people a different, higher, more difficult aim. In the tradition of John the Baptist he labored in terms "of the Kingdom's hill and dale," words found in one of the teacher's hymns. Grundtvig also wrote:

"Far more valuable than lustrous gold
It is one's God and oneself
to know . . ."

Boy Scouts Increase

• Boy Scout membership in rural communities has increased during the past five years by over 150,000 according to a recent summary based on an estimate of 514 rural councils. In 1945, there were 15,985 rural units (under 2,500); in 1949, there were 23,055. The estimate of 1949 rural Boy Scout membership is 498,545.

How Rural Western Europe Looks to Me

B. L. HUMMEL

Within the last twelve months it has been my privilege to make two trips to Europe as a representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. The two trips covered visits to ten of the Western European nations.

It has been a great privilege to visit and study the situation in so many countries, but it has not been a reassuring experience. One is impressed more and more by the dependency of nations on the support and the stabilizing influence of the United States. One is equally impressed by our immaturity and lack of readiness to assume the responsibility which has been thrust upon us.

Nations turn to us with a great sense of dependency but with a great feeling of uncertainty as well. They have no doubt about our strength in terms of physical, economic, or scientific resources but they are seriously concerned about our maturity of judgment in world affairs. Europe is still in a great state of uncertainty and agitation and the psychological, the political, and the military situations are matters of our immediate and serious concern.

Agricultural Production and Food Supply

In terms of prewar conditions, the nations of Europe are now comparatively well fed. Agricultural production in 1950 is approaching prewar levels. The problem at present is that of distribution and trade. In several countries surpluses of certain commodities are accumulating to the troublesome point. It is hoped that the new economic agreements now being worked out between western European countries will help to promote international trade agreements and result in the exchange of these surpluses for other commodities needed in each country.

The farms in Europe are generally quite small. A large part of the labor is done by hand and with horse and ox-drawn equipment. Production per acre, however, is very high when compared with our more extensive type of agriculture in the United States. These high yields are gotten by intensive cultivation, not through the use of scientific information. There is a great spread between the scientific information held by the research and educational workers of Europe and the practices which are used by the farmers of the continent.

In addition to being small, European farms are divided into many widely separated parcels of land. Food production could be increased considerably and brought far above prewar levels if the small fragments of land which now constitute a farm could be combined into one single tract of equal area, and if modern production methods could be put into effect on the average farm.

Reconstruction

The rebuilding of war-torn areas has progressed at a surprising rate in many parts of Europe. The initiative of the people, their skill as builders, and Marshall Aid have combined to bring about the construction of many modern, attractive and substantial buildings in the place of those destroyed in World War II. In London particularly, and in many other parts of Europe, large housing developments have been completed and are providing even better housing facilities for the people than they had previously.

Western Germany again is the ex-

Religious News Service Photograph

ception to this rule. There one finds nearly fifty per cent of the public buildings and private homes still lying in rubble, while a dense population, increased by the influx of millions of displaced persons, is crowded into the inadequate number of dwelling units that remain usable for human habitation. It appeared that more was being accomplished in rebuilding the smaller villages and towns but that little progress was being made in the large urban centers.

Economic and Political Situation

Since these two subjects are so directly interdependent, they are treated together. On the surface Europe's economic recovery is truly amazing. In general, employment is high and business fairly good. Prices and taxes are both very high and what would normally be considered good wages does not mean prosperity for the average family. In general, prices are as high throughout European countries as they are in the States, except that a few strictly European commodities can be bought cheaper there than they can in America. Ireland seemed to me to be the only place where the general level of prices was distinctly lower than in the United States.

Of the countries which I visited, Italy and Germany were the countries in which people were not fully employed and there was great social, economic, and political unrest.

Principles of Democracy

From an American viewpoint, communism is widespread throughout Europe, but more strictly speaking Italy and Germany are the countries in which one finds whole communities in many areas that are distinctly and predominantly communistic. Undoubtedly, Marshall Aid is the only thing that has kept communism from sweeping like a great psychological tide over all Western Europe since World War II.

Americans must realize that simply pouring money into Western Europe will not make democracy safe. We are apparently more successful in fighting the battles to defend democracy than we are in teaching its high principles to European nations which are face to face with the extreme social, economic, and political problems of reconstruction.

Psychological Problem

Too many people in Europe seem to know America only through our tourists, our movies, jazz music, our sensationally illustrated magazines, and the operation of big business corporations. These do not give a reasonable or accurate appreciation of America or Americans. Europeans are courteous and appreciative of the assistance we have extended to them but they are envious of us and there is a strong tendency to consider us as over-rich, immature, loud-voiced egotists. Neither envy nor hatred provide a sound basis upon which to build a permanent peace.

The attitude of Europeans toward Americans suggests that, important as military defenses may be for all Western Europe, there is still a more important psychological problem which we face. We must understand ourselves and we must be sure that our virtues are known and appreciated abroad as well as our weaknesses seem to be known. Since we are considered immature by Europeans, let us indicate a developing maturity by a willingness to examine ourselves in the light of European criticism. No more mature trait could be exhibited and it would undoubtedly lead to improvement in many American traits.

Information Needed

It is undoubtedly true that a great many European attitudes are based on a lack of information or on actual misunderstandings concerning America. This leads logically to the conclusion that we need to materially improve our methods of acquainting European people with American ideals and cultural traits. If the principles for which we stand march on across all barriers it will be because we find the most effective means of spreading them and giving them appeal to the peoples of the world.

Adult Education

There are many interesting differences between educational practices in Europe and America. Elementary and secondary education are conducted quite differently but it is in the field of adult education that the greatest differences occur.

First of all, it seems to be taken for granted that the young adults of many European countries will attend winter schools and night classes. This is not limited to one or two special countries but is general throughout Europe. The Danish Folk Schools provide a shining illustration of this type of educational work, but Denmark excels in many ways. Although the Danish Folk Schools are given state support, the principals are free to determine the program and teaching methods in these schools. Often the principalship is passed down from father to son and often the teachers and principals of these schools seem more like priests than teachers in the usual sense of the term. These schools give to their pupils a broad and constructive philosophy of life. Great emphasis is placed on citizenship and character development and much attention is given to government, history, and the traditions upon which the nation and good citizenship is founded. Many of the nation's greatest leaders have come from these schools.

Public Opinion

Newspapers in Europe seem very peculiar to the average American. They are much less sensational, have fewer cross-page headlines, less advertising and fewer pictures. Magazines are more conservative and less highly illustrated. Again advertising is far less conspicuous. Our type of "comic book" and "funny paper" is scarcely known in Europe.

In line with the conservatism of current publications, the radio programs of Europe are a joy and a treat to those who are sick of hillbilly music, soap operas, hot jazz and incessant advertising of the glorious and unparalleled qualities of mundane products.

The legitimate stage is relatively more popular than the motion picture in Europe although picture shows are increasing in popularity. Operas and concerts are good and

e generally well patronized in Eu-
pe. Music on the radios, in the
fes, the theatres and the homes is
perior to the general standard of
usic to which we are accustomed.
Lectures and public discussions of
vic problems and political issues
ouse real interest and enthusiasm
Europe. The average citizen seems
realize that his immediate well-
eing is dependent upon the solu-
on of present-day public problems.

he Church

The religious situation in Europe
vastly different from that in
merica. The differences between
atholic and Protestant groups are
ore sharply drawn but Protestant-
m is not split into as many denomi-
ations in Europe as it is in Amer-
ca. Broadly speaking, the people of
urope live in villages and the char-
cteristic situation is for one large,
eautiful church building to stand
n the center of this village com-
munity, visible for many miles and
ppearing to dominate and give a
pirit of centrality to the whole area.

Actually, the church in most parts
f Europe is a state supported insti-
ution and the priests or ministers
re state employees paid from public
unds. The people have little sense
f responsibility for the maintenance
r program of the local church and
in large areas comparatively few
people maintain an active relation-
ship with the church. On the other
hand, the unity, centrality, and sta-
bility of the church tend to make it
a greater relative influence in the
public life of European countries
than it is in the public life of Amer-
ica.

In Conclusion

Yes, we must rearm America and
we must enable Western Europe to
rearm herself. The United Nations
Organization must be maintained.
An international police force must
be established and supported. West-
ern European nations must federate
or in some other way lessen and re-
move economic, trade, language, and
political barriers. If our political
and economic way of life is superior,
and if our cultural pattern and sys-
tem of ethics bring greater happiness
and well-being to mankind, we must
learn how to teach the advantage of
these systems and theories to the
people of other countries in such a
way that they too will understand,
appreciate, and be able to use them.

Finally, if we believe that the
Christian religion teaches the one
and only way to the brotherhood of
man, then we must be willing and
ready to strengthen the program of
the Christian churches at home and
abroad to the point where all people
will come to see that Christianity
does provide the one and only way
to peace among the nations of the
world.

"Jesus—A Farmer"

• Jesus was a carpenter, we are told, but his life has been interpreted to us "across the fields of waving grain, in vineyards, and up the mountain slopes where may be heard the bleating of sheep."

C. Clayton Terrell, a Quaker farmer, cites many instances of Jesus' personal interest in everyday farm scenes in an article published recently by *The American Friend,* Richmond, Ind.

The conclusion is that Jesus was even more familiar with shepherding and farming than he was with carpentering since he found in them "his best source material for teaching lessons of spiritual verities."

Cathedral Films

• James K. Friedrich, an ordained Episcopal minister, is the head of Cathedral Films. He uses a lot of material from his own church, St. Michael's and All Angels Episcopalian Church in Sherman Oaks, California.

The most interesting thing about a Cathedral production is that it begins and ends with a special prayer service. Each day before work there is also a brief service.

To date, more than fifty films have been produced under Cathedral's supervision. These are available through a network of more than 300 distributors, including the Religious Film Association and YMCA libraries.

Christmas Carol

The earth has grown old with its burden of care,
But at Christmas it always is young.
The heart of the jewel burns lustrous and fair,
And its soul full of music breaks forth on the air,
When the song of the angels is sung.

It is coming, old earth, it is coming tonight!
On the snowflakes that covered thy sod
The feet of the Christ-child fall gentle and white
And the voice of the Christ-child tells out
That mankind are the children of God.

On the sad and the lonely, the wretched and poor,
The voice of the Christ-child shall fall;
And to every blind wanderer open the door
Of a hope that he dared not to dream of before,
With a sunshine of welcome for all.

The feet of the humblest may walk in the field
Where the feet of the holiest have trod,
This, this is the marvel to mortals revealed
When the silvery trumpets of Christmas have pealed,
That mankind are the children of God.

—Phillips Brooks

Sixteen Rural Ministers Win Awards

EARL W. McMUNN

• Sixteen Ohio pastors have just been awarded the title of Rural Minister of the Year for their respective denominations. They are the winners in the program to honor ministers who have been making an outstanding contribution to better living in rural areas.

The Rural Minister of the Year project is sponsored by The Ohio Council of Churches, Oberlin School of Theology, Ohio Farm Bureau Federation and Farm Bureau Insurance Companies, and The Ohio Farmer.

All areas of the state were represented in the 150 nominations received for 75 pastors. The judges found many fine records of accomplishment in rural work. In fact, they were forced to make many hairline decisions before the final list of winners was complete.

Here are the winners with the denomination they represent:

Baptist—Rev. Lawrence Sprankle, New Lexington.

Church of the Brethren—Rev. Kenneth W. Hollinger, Thornville.

Church of God—Rev. Louis P. Meyer, Greensburg.

Congregational Christian—Rev. Carl J. Landes, Shandon.

Disciples—Rev. Robert Weber, Newton Falls.

Evangelical and Reformed—Rev. Paul W. Lammers, Bloomville.

Evangelical United Brethren—Rev. John Bench, Paris.

Evangelical United Brethren—Rev. Alva W. Knoll, Tippecanoe.

Friends—Rev. John Harvey, Highland.

Lutheran, United—Rev. James L. Lumadue, Lucas.

Lutheran, Evangelical—Rev. J. A. Schoffer, Warren.

Mennonite—Rev. William A. Stauffer, Sugarcreek.

Methodist, Ohio Conference—Rev. DeLoss Smith, Racine.

Methodist, North East Ohio Conference—Rev. E. W. Hibbard, Newton Falls.

Presbyterian—Rev. Joseph H. Varner, Fredericksburg.

Protestant Episcopal—Rev. David M. Talbot, Coshocton.

Many fine ministers have gone into country church work with the idea that they could make a real contribution to better rural living. They have taken an active part in farm organizations and contributed valuable leadership. Their opinions have been respected by folks entirely outside of their church membership. Records supplied by those who nominated ministers for these awards were full of such examples.

Rev. Lawrence Sprankle serves three rural churches at New Lexington, Oakfield and Ebenezer. He has carried on an aggressive ministry at all three. He has led in building church basements at New Lexington and Ebenezer for Sunday School and social purposes.

"He is a member of the county Farm Bureau and of their local community council. He takes an active part in all community affairs. He is now serving as president of the county ministerial association. He is sought after as speaker for many rural affairs." That is just part of the information from one man who wrote to support the nomination of Rev. Kenneth Hollinger of Thornville.

"He puts the interest of the church ahead of his own personal interest." That was part of the comment about Rev. Louis P. Meyer of Greensburg, who represents the Church of God. He belongs to the volunteer fire department as one of his community activities.

Many who submitted nominations praised their ministers for their personality and Christian influence. Here was a comment from one man in regard to Rev. Carl J. Landes of Shandon: "If I were looking for a well adjusted family man, full of happiness and understanding of not only his own family but mankind, my seeking would stop at the doorstep of Carl Landes."

The Disciples Church is represented by Rev. Robert Weber. He has made a fine record in building up a struggling rural charge. He took a church most other ministers would not even consider and by hard work has showed a remarkable record of church growth, attendance and general enthusiasm.

Rev. Paul W. Lammers has taken a leading part in promoting many agricultural practices. He has conducted meetings on such subjects as soil conservation and artificial breeding of dairy cattle. He has been a member of the state CROP committee and made a trip to Europe after the war with a boat load of goats as part of a program to help re-stock devastated areas.

Rev. John Bench is a member of the National Town and Country Department of the Evangelical United Brethren Church. He is recognized as one of their outstanding rural leaders. He has been at his present parish of two churches for several years. All departments of church and community work have registered tremendous growth during the time he has been there.

Rev. Alva Knoll has been particularly active in soil conservation and agricultural extension work. He has also taken a place of leadership in promoting a health program for Tuscarawas County.

Rev. John Bench is the representative from the Evangelical side of the Evangelical United Brethren Church. Rev. Alva Knoll is the representative of the United Brethren side of the Evangelical United Brethren Church.

One of the ministers who gets part of his living from the land the same as his people is Rev. John Harvey of Highland. Accompanying his nomination was a letter which said in part: "You will be interested in the fact that John Harvey came to Fairview Friends Meeting because it was completely a rural church. The Meeting bought a small house with three acres of land where John produces chickens and eggs for market and also much of the food for his family. I am not a member of the Fairview Meeting, but I have had a fair chance to work with John. I know many people in the community, both among Friends and other

hurch groups, who regard him, his amily and his work very highly."

Rev. James L. Lumadue serves the Mifflin Lutheran Parish of two rural hurches—Mt. Zion and St. Mihaels. He has been a 4-H adviser, as a young married people's study lub and is regarded as a leader in nany community activities.

Rev. J. A. Schoffer is now engaged n a building improvement program t his church in Lordstown. This will provide better educational and social facilities for members of the congregation. Membership in this church has been growing at a rapid rate.

Another minister with a real down-to-earth approach to his work is Rev. William A. Stauffer. He is recognized as one of the outstanding rural leaders in his denomination, the Mennonite Church. Besides carrying the work of a busy pastor in a large parish, he owns a Tuscarawas County Farm which has received wide recognition because of the soil conservation practices which he is following.

Top honors for rural church work in the Ohio Conference of the Methodist denomination went to Rev. DeLoss Smith. He is serving five churches in Meigs County and supervising three other charges with a total of 19 churches. This supervised parish idea is a new form of work for training supply ministers. This circuit of churches is working for church and parsonage improvement, among other activities.

Rev. E. W. Hibbard is winner of the Rural Minister award for the North East Ohio Conference of the Methodist Church. He is located at Newton Falls and has been active in many community activities, but has taken an especially prominent part in the Buckeye Recreation Workshop.

Honors among Presbyterian ministers went to Rev. Joseph H. Varner of Fredericksburg. He has been active in the Grange, Farm Council, headed the CROP work for the county and helped in organizing a local fire department. He was also influential in federating four denominations into one church.

Rev. David M. Talbot of Coshocton wins the Rural Minister of the Year award as a representative of the Protestant Episcopal Church. He has taken part in many community activities, including the County Ministerial Association, Cancer Fund, CROP organization as well as Youth Center.

All the winning ministers attended the School for Rural Leaders conducted by the Oberlin School of Theology in cooperation with the Town and Country Department of the Ohio Council of Churches. In this school, they received training to help them continue as leaders in rural community life, as well as to become even better preachers and pastors.

Judges of the Rural Minister of the Year awards program were: H. C. Ramsower, director emeritus of the Ohio Extension Service; Russell H. Hoy, rural minister and author of The Country Parson Ponders in *The Ohio Farmer;* and Leonard Yochum, Clinton County farmer and lay church leader.—*Ohio Farmer*

"Why the Rural Ministry?"

• Paul D. Richardson, a rural minister, tells in a recent issue of *The Town and Country Pastor,* Indianapolis, Ind., why he feels he can best serve Christ in rural areas.

The author loves rural people and their way of life and feels there is deep satisfaction in ministering to the "sheep" of "God's back pastures." Some of the opportunities of the rural ministry, he finds, are "the opportunity of integrating the church and community life . . . the opportunity of having an unusually close relationship with the first, smallest and most influential unit of society, the family. This enables him to emphasize Christianity as a seven-day-a-week religion . . . the opportunity to guide young people in their educational and vocational training . . . the opportunity to broaden the concept of religion by giving a long-range view of the church program . . . the opportunity to promote Christian unity among churches."

Grandma Moses at 90

• When Grandma Moses of Eagle Bridge, N. Y., became 90 years of age, Albany, which is near Eagle Bridge, discovered the elderly lady who began to paint fourteen years ago when her doctor advised her to give up some of her usual work in her home. Of course, Grandma Moses had been discovered by the art world of Europe and America long before, because she is undoubtedly now the most famous painter of primitives in America.

It was good, though, that a hundred guests could gather in the city of Albany, and it was reassuring to learn that Mrs. Moses' attire for parties has not changed. She came again with the bonnet that has ribbons that tie under the chin.

And sixty-five paintings, some never before shown to the public, were hung in the Art Institute of the nearby city.

Mrs. Moses has not very definitely planned her 100th birthday party. She has, however, invited a few friends in the village over to spend the evening with her.

The New York Times, that distinguished city paper which now runs rural editorials, had a most appreciative editorial on Mrs. Moses' birthday.

Purposes of This Journal

The purposes of this Journal are:

A. To encourage cooperation among rural churches.

B. To improve the administration of the local church, this to include organization of the church, finance, religious education, community relationships, and the training of lay leadership.

C. To stimulate the development of a Christian philosophy of rural life, this to embrace ethical issues in agriculture, social reconstruction, and government programs; and the content of the minister's message.

Part of Larger Program

The Journal is an important part of an enlarged "cooperative rural church program" that will encourage a national "rural church movement."

Index to TOWN AND COUNTRY CHURCH—1950

	Month	Page
AGRICULTURE		
Brazil Program, by R. Howard Porter	Nov.	12
Congregational Christian Policy Statement No. 1	Oct.	12
Eastern Europe	Oct.	10
San Joaquin Valley	Oct.	11
Aaronsburg, sesquicentennial celebration	Apr.	12
Alpine, Tenn., recreational program, by Paul D. Olmstead	Oct.	1
American Institute of Cooperation, by Karl Butler	Nov.	14
American Medical Association, 1949 award	Apr.	4
Conference on Rural Health	Sept.	4
ARCHITECTURE, Town and Country Church, E. Dargan Butt	Sept.	1
Art in Rural Life, Allen Eaton	Nov.	7
Awards, for rural ministers, Earl W. McMunn	Dec.	10
Bailey, William L.		
Gilbert White	Sept.	5
BAPTIST		
Andover Newton Convocation	Sept.	6
Leaflets	Mar.	6
Rosa O. Hall Certificate winners	Oct.	2
Southern Program	Sept.	7
Bastuscheck, Burton		
Today to Country Pastures	Apr.	3
Bible College of Missouri, Seth W. Slaughter	Nov.	1
Bigcity to Countrylane, John P. Sala	Jan.	14
BIOGRAPHY		
	Nov.	13
Gilbert White, William L. Bailey	Sept.	5
Warren Hugh Wilson, Bristol Chatterton	Dec.	3
BOOK REVIEWS		
Agrarian Reform and Moral Responsibility	Mar.	16
Christian Religious Education of Older People, Paul B. Maves	May	14
Community and Christian Education, Tilford T. Swearingen	Oct.	14
Cooking for Christ, Florence S. Berger	Apr.	15
Diary of a Country Parson, James Woodeforde	Nov.	16
Forever the Land, Russell and Kate Lord	May	15
Handicapped Child, Seward Hiltner	Nov.	16
Horace Plunkett, Margaret Digby	Oct.	15
Hound-Dog Man, Fred Gipson	Nov.	15
Hunter's Horn, Harriette Arnow	Nov.	15
Living as Comrades, Daniel Johnson Fleming	Dec.	15
More Than Bread, Frank B. Herzel	Apr.	15
Out of the Earth, Louis Bromfield	Oct.	14
Parsonage Doorway, Anna Laura Gebhard	Dec.	15
Poems of Edwin Markham	Oct.	15
Primitive, Feike Feikema	Nov.	15
Rebuilding Rural America, Earle Hitch	Oct.	14
Rowan Head, Elizabeth Ogilvie	Nov.	15
Rural America and the Extension Service, Edmund de S. Brunner and E. Hein Pao Yang	May	14
Rural Prospect, Mark Rich	Sept.	15
Sagebrush Circuit, Kendrick Strong	Dec.	15
Sam Higginbottom, Farmer	Mar.	16
Scandinavian Adult Education, Edited by Ragnar Lund	May	14
Small Sects in America, Elmer T. Clark	Apr.	15
Small Town Renaissance, Richard Waverly Poston	Sept.	15
That Darned Minister's Son, Haydn S. Pearson	Oct.	14
Way West, A. B. Guthrie	Nov.	15
West of the Hill, Gladys Hasty Carroll	Nov.	15
Boy Scouts, Rural	Apr.	14
Brazil's Agricultural Program, R. Howard Porter	Nov.	12
Brethren in Europe	Jan.	16
Brotherhood, Rural Church, Randall A. Fordham	Nov.	3
Butler, Karl		
American Institute of Cooperation	Nov.	14
Butt, E. Dargan		
Town and Country Church Architecture	Sept.	1
Campbell, John C. Folk School	Apr.	1
CANADA		
Anglican Rural Church	Mar.	12
United Church	Apr.	10
Carter, Gordon		
Rural Recreation	Apr.	11
CATHOLIC		
Rural Life Award	Mar.	6
Chatterton, Bristol		
Warren Hugh Wilson	Dec	3
CHURCHES, Rural		
Some Protestant Churches in Rural America, H. Paul Douglass	Jan.	1
Frederick County, Maryland	Nov.	7
Kansas	Jan.	13
Kentucky	May	12
Maine	May	12
Three-Way	Nov.	15
Columbia University Seminar Case Studies	Sept.	9
Comity Principles for Rural Churches	Oct.	8-9
CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTIAN		
Agricultural Policy Statement	Oct.	12
CONVOCATION		
Report of Lincoln	Feb.	issue
Program for 1950	Sept.	12-13
COOPER, Kenneth M.		
Thank God for Rain	Mar.	15
Cooperative Action in Washington, James E. Merlin	Oct.	10
Corn, The Best Ear	Apr.	4
Cosby, P. G., III		
Cooperative Work by Six Churches in Virginia	May	1
Crop Dedication Prayer	Mar.	11
Dairy Farmers—study of Wisconsin	Oct.	6
Danish Land, Good Life on, Peter Manniche	Apr.	1
Decentralization (minutes of N.D.I. conference)	Sept.	10
Doctor at Fabius, N. Y.	Nov.	13
Douglass, H. Paul		
Some Protestant Churches in Rural America	Jan.	1
Earlham College, program of community dynamics	May	11
Eaton, Allen		
Art in Rural Life	Nov.	7
Ecumenicity in a Village, Charles H. Gilbert	May	5
Electrification, Rural Facilities	Nov.	13
Emory University In-Service Training	May	4
End of Summer		
Murray L. Wagner	Oct.	3
European Conditions, B. L. Hummel	Dec.	7
European Trip in 1952—Committee on Town and Country	Oct.	16
EVANGELICAL AND REFORMED CHURCH		
Attainment Standards for Town and Country Churches	May	9
EVANGELICAL UNITED BRETHREN		
Rural Church Programs	Nov.	12
Evangelistic, United Advance	Sept.	15
Family Farms, C. Morton Hanna	Oct.	5

	Month	Page
Family Fellowship in the Rural Church, Edward W. Gebhard	Nov.	5
Farming in Eastern Europe	Oct.	10
Farm Vacations and Holidays, Inc.	May	16
Farm Youth Exchange	Oct.	12
Farmer, Milo		
Work with Hands	Jan.	15
Farmers Home Administration—Private Loans on Farm Mortgages	May	2
Federated Churches in Mitchell, Neb., Lawrence Dry	Mar.	15
Felton, Ralph A.		
These My Brethren	Sept.	2
Food and Agriculture Organization	Nov.	10
Fordham, Randall A.		
Rural Church Brotherhood	Nov.	3
Four-Square Life, Carl W. Saunders	Mar.	4
Frost, Robert, Honored	May	16
Garrett Biblical Institute In-Service Training	May	16
Gebhard, Edward W.		
Rural Church—Fellowship of Families	Nov.	5
Gilbert, Charles H.		
Ecumenicity in a Village	May	5
Girl Scout—pamphlet for Lone Troops	Apr.	14
Grass Is Immortal, John J. Ingalls	Apr.	3
Greene, Shirley E.		
How Shall Our Resources Be Saved?	May	7
Green Lake, Wis., In-Service Training	Nov.	6
Grieser, Ralph		
Collects in Spring	Apr.	11
Grundtvig's Church, by Benson Y. Landis	Dec.	5
Guard, Samuel R.		
Save Our Country Church	May	11
Hands, work with, Milo Farmer	Jan.	15
Hankins, James E.—mimeograph tracings	Mar.	9
Hanna, C. Morton		
More Family Farms or Better Rural Familes?	Oct.	5
Harvest Festival—a Statement	Sept.	7
HEALTH		
American Medical Association	Sept.	4
Heifer Project	Jan.	13
Goats	May	15
Hidden Springs—cooperative community in N. J.	Apr.	15
Hiwassee Seminar, Aaron W. Rapking	Oct.	16
Home Missions Congress Recommendations	May	6
Houstoun, Matilda		
Gilbert White of Selborne	Nov.	13
Hummel, B. L.		
How Western Europe Looks to Me	Dec.	7
Indiana Church Merger	Sept.	7
Ingalls, John J.		
Grass Is Immortal	Apr.	3
IN-SERVICE TRAINING SCHOOLS		
List	Apr.	16
Emory University	May	4
Garrett Biblical Seminary	May	16
Green Lake, Wis.	Nov.	6
Hiwassee	Oct.	16
Oberlin	May	15
Intergroup Relations in Rural Areas	May	12
International Peoples College	Mar.	1
International Peoples College	May	11
Irish Agricultural Organization Society	Oct.	11
Sir Horace Plunkett (book review)	Oct.	15
Jewish Agricultural Society	Nov.	11
Johnstone, Margaret Blair		
Take Off the City Blinders	Mar.	1
Kagawa's Activities	May	4
Kansas Rural Churches	Jan.	13
Kentucky Rural Churches	May	12
Kester, Howard, new director of John C. Campbell Folk School	Apr.	4
Landis, Benson Y., Grundtvig's Church	Dec.	5
Larger Parish in Harrison County, Mo., Marvin T. Judy	Mar.	13
Laubach, Frank C.		
Literacy Crusade in Africa	Apr.	14
Ligutti, Rt. Rev. Msgr. L. G.		
Pilgrim's Progress	Sept.	8
Lindsay, Vachel		
The New Localism	Nov.	9
Literacy Crusade in Africa, Frank C. Laubach	Apr.	14
Lord's Acre Auction at Pittstown, N. Y.	Apr.	12
Lowdermilk, Walter C., Rural Missions in Africa	Oct.	7
LUTHERAN		
Christ for Changing Countryside	Mar.	9
McMunn, Earl W.		
Sixteen Ohio Rural Ministers Win Awards	Dec.	10
Maine—Rural Organization in Three Towns	May	12
Manniche, Peter		
Good Life on Danish Land	Apr.	1
Markham, Edwin		
Letter to "Friends of the Man with the Hoe"	Sept.	16
Maryland, Churches in Frederick County	Nov.	7
Mather, W. G.		
Country Churches Reflect Changes	Mar.	5
Medearis, Dale W., Disciples rural executive	Oct.	15
Merlin, James E.		
Cooperative Action (in Washington)	Oct.	10
Merom Institute	May	13
METHODIST		
Town Church Conference in Baldwin, Kansas	Oct.	7
Mexican Agricultural Program with Rockefeller Foundation	Sept.	16
MIGRANTS		
Concern for	Mar.	9
Grapes of Wrath are Stored Again	Sept.	4
What Kind of a Harvest Will They Reap?	Apr.	4
Miller, Raymond W. wins Catholic Rural Life Award	Mar.	6
Millet, home of, Benson Y. Landis	May	13
Minnesota		
Five Workshops	Mar.	15
Hawley's 50th Anniversary	Nov.	11
Missionary Visits Your Town, Carlton W. Saywell	Mar.	10
Moses, Grandma—Paintings in Europe	Sept.	13
MUSIC		
Graded Choir, Robert T. Frerichs	Mar.	14
National Council of Churches	Sept.	2
Neiderfrank, E. J.		
Farm People and Social Security	Jan.	13
Vermont Rural Pastors' Conference	Apr.	14
Oberlin Graduate School for Rural Leaders	May	15
Ohio—E. & R. New Knoxville Church	May	8
Olmstead, Paul D.		
"Wreck-reation" versus "Re-creation"	Oct.	1
Organic Farming, Benson Y. Landis	Sept.	14
Parable of the Talents, John A. Westin	Mar.	8
Peacock, John		
Visual Aids and Rural Work	Nov.	13
PENNSYLVANIA		
N. E. Christian Rural Fellowship Conference Report	Mar.	3
Country Churches Reflect Changes, W. G. Mather	Mar.	5
Personality Development	Nov.	6
Pitcher, Philip N.		
Northeastern Pennsylvania Reports 1948 Conference	Mar.	3
PLUNKETT, Sir Horace		
Irish Agricultural Organization Society	Oct.	11
Biography by Margaret Digby	Oct.	15
POEMS		
Gilbert White of Selborne, Matilda Houstoun	Nov.	13

	Month	Page
New Mown, Rusticus	May	4
Thank God for Rain, Kenneth M. Cooper	Mar.	15
Today to Country Pastures, Burton C. Bastuscheck	Apr.	3
Vespers, Rusticus	Sept.	4
Point IV and the Churches, John H. Reisner	Apr.	2
Porter, R. Howard		
Preach Christ and Plant Corn	Nov.	12
PRAYERS		
At Table	Nov.	16
Collects in Spring, Ralph Grieser	Apr.	11
Crop Dedication	Mar.	11
Dedication Litany, Jeanie K. Sherman	May	11
Father Pour Thy Spirit, Gordon Leech, Jr.	Oct.	16
For the Church in the Country, Georgia Harkness	Sept.	16
Preach Christ and Plant Corn, Howard Porter	Nov.	12
Presbyterian U.S.A. Manual for Town and Country Churches	Nov.	9
Protestant Policy on Rural Economic and Social Relations	Apr.	5-10
Public Relations—The Pastor, Florence Schleicher Teed	May	3
Quaker Farmers and Others in Seminar	Sept.	3
Randolph, Henry S.		
Thy Kingdom Come in Rural America	Dec.	1
Ratcliff, Darius M.		
Gospel Into Homes	Mar.	12
Rauschenbusch Lectures at Colgate Rochester Divinity School	Mar.	14
RECREATION		
Rural, Gordon Carter	Apr.	11
"Wreck-reation" versus "Re-creation," Paul Olmstead	Oct.	1
Redemptive, Creative, Christian, James D. Wyker	Apr.	13
Reisner, John H.		
The Churches and Point IV	Apr.	2
Degree from Yale University	Sept.	13
River Valleys, Shirley E. Greene	May	7
Roanridge—Episcopal Rural Work Progresses	Jan.	16
Rural Life Sunday—1950 Statement	Mar.	4
Rural Problem Is the City Mind	May	9
Sala, John P.		
From Bigcity to Countrylane	Jan.	14
Saunders, Carl W.		
The Four-Square Life	Mar.	4
Saywell, Carlton W.		
When the Missionary Visits Your Town	Mar.	10
School Buildings, Rural	Nov.	12
Shaw University In-Service Training (pictures)	Mar.	11 and 13
Slaughter, Seth		
Pioneering with the Bible College of Missouri	Nov.	1
Sherman, Caroline		
Selected Rural Fiction	Nov.	15
Silent Miracle of Recurring Life	Mar.	6
Snyder, Claude J.—named chairman	May	4
Social Security and Farm People, E. J. Neiderfrank	Jan.	13
Soil, God Gave Us, Ide P. Trotter	Nov.	4
Sockman, Ralph W.		
Taking Our Chances	Mar.	7
Sunday School Problems, Richard O. Comfort	Apr.	11
Take Off the City Blinders, Margaret Blair Johnstone	Mar.	1
Teed, Florence Schleicher		
The Pastor: Public Relations Agent	May	3
Town and Country Church—Voyage of Discovery	Oct.	13
Trotter, Ide P.		
God Gave Us Soil	Nov.	4
Urban Convocation report	Apr.	12
Vermont Rural Pastors' Conference	Apr.	14
Visual Aids and Rural Work, John Peacock	Nov.	13
List of Films	Sept.	11
Vocations, Church	Nov.	6
Wagner, Murray L.		
The End of Summer	Oct.	3
Weigle, W. Harold—honored by Mass. Commissioner of Agriculture	Apr.	12
Westin, John A.		
Parable of the Talents	Mar.	8
White, Gilbert of Selborne, Matilda Houstoun	Nov.	13
White, Gilbert, William L. Bailey	Sept.	5
Williamson, Ralph L.		
Constitutions for Federated Churches	Sept.	7
WORSHIP		
Rural Seminars in 1950	Mar.	14
"Wreck-reation" versus "Re-creation," Paul D. Olmstead	Oct.	1
Wyker, James D.		
Redemptive, Creative, Christian	Apr.	13
Youth—Future of Rural	Nov.	14
Zigler, M. R.		
Proposed European Trip in 1952	Oct.	16

Methodist Town and Country Conference

The second National Methodist Town and Country Conference, sponsored by the bishops of the church, will be held in Sioux City, Iowa, July 21-24, 1951.

The general topic of this conference will be "Christian Advance in Town and Country," and study groups will be held on Christian Advance in the "Local Church," the "Family," "Church Leadership," "Community Life," "Stewardship Responsibility," "Communication and Cultural Arts," and "Christian Advance in Today's World."

Further information on this conference may be procured by writing to Dr. Glenn F. Sanford, Department of Town and Country Work, Division of Home Missions and Church Extension, 150 Fifth Avenue, New York 11, N. Y.

New Rural Worker

Dr. Wesley A. Hotchkiss has been elected Associate Director of the Town and Country Department by the Board of Home Missions of the Congregational Christian Churches, of which Thomas Alfred Tripp is director. He began his service with the Board on September 1, 1950, with headquarters at 287 Fourth Avenue, New York City.

Dr. Hotchkiss was born in rural Wisconsin and was graduated in sociology from Northland College, Ashland, Wisconsin. He took his ministerial training at Chicago Theological Seminary and has just completed his graduate studies in the University of Chicago.

Dr. Hotchkiss left the position of associate in the Department of Sociology of Religion in Chicago Theological Seminary, where he studied and worked with Professors Samuel C. Kincheloe and Victor Obenhaus. He has been pastor of rural Congregational churches in Wisconsin, chaplain in World War II and research assistant for the Cincinnati Council of Churches.

Dr. Hotchkiss comes to his new task with high qualifications through his background of experience as a successful rural pastor, outstanding research experience and his studies which have prepared him for work with the church from the point of view of the community and the relations of man and the land.

Book Reviews

agebrush Circuit. By Kendrick Strong. Macmillan, New York. 1950. $2.50.

The author went out to a struggling Congregational rural church in the northern Great Plains for a three-month term of student summer service and stayed ten months during his student period at Yale Divinity School. The place is a small village community, bleak and "hard up," which has the pseudonym of "Royden" in the book. Sagebrush, sheep and frontier culture are characteristics of the area known to those who recognize it. The time-setting is the most intense year of the depression and dust storms of the early nineteen-thirties. To further complicate the local situation, two meddlesome conservative women evangelists were busy dividing the church and community.

The way Mr. Strong, as a young theological student, faced the problems of competition of the small sect and of a split, discouraged congregation represents much of the value of the volume, which also suggests ways of reviving a "dead" church. The author established rapport with sheep ranchers and villagers as well as drunks and shepherds, kept up his own morale and started two churches in outlying churchless communities to form a going circuit. This is not a manual of methods for the rural pastor. It is a true story of events as they happened in a parish.

Aside from being practical, the book makes good reading for entertainment. The ridiculous and the realistic reveal the sense of humor and earnestness of the author, which would be helpful if possessed by any rural pastor. Mr. Strong has done a service to the rural church and to the ordinary reader in search of a few hours' pastime. Rural pastors may glean a new idea here and there among the antidotes, many of which are told just for good reading.

—Thomas Alfred Tripp

Living as Comrades. By Daniel Johnson Fleming. Agricultural Missions, Inc., 156 Fifth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y. 1950. $1.50.

Daniel Fleming, professor Emeritus of Union Theological Seminary, here presents a study of factors making for community. This is a fresh statement on the subject, out of recent experience of foreign missionaries and Christian nationals. Dr. Fleming had earlier written a book, *Ventures in Simpler Living,* which has been out of print. The study is based in large part upon reports and comments made by 144 missionaries and nationals.

Dr. Fleming presents discussions of practical and critical issues arising from housing. What of homes with accustomed American standards? Of homes to be copied? Of adaptations? Of living the way villagers live? He considers many issues and values, without presenting easy solutions or dogmatic answers. He has a chapter on "The High Place of Attitude and Spirit."

There are "final suggestions." "A choice is always open to each one of us. There is always a margin for initiative, a place for conclusive thinking." There are conflicting ideals, differing personalities and situations. But we can select, and register and act upon our convictions. Every sensitive person must feel an inner tension as the extremes in manner of living on this planet are contemplated. "We can attempt to achieve independence of things, leaning but lightly upon them." The love of God for man and of man for God and of man for man results in new power and insight to meet critical situations.

—Benson Y. Landis

Parsonage Doorway. By Anna Laura Gebhard. Abingdon-Cokesbury, Nashville, Tenn. 1950. $1.75.

The stories in *Parsonage Doorway* are about the author's own home in a mid-western rural community, about her family of four lively children and their father, the minister who makes all visitors feel that they are welcome.

Many of these stories bring laughter and a lighter heart to the reader, some bring a smile mixed with tears, for the author has the ability to paint her word pictures with humor and pathos.

Mrs. Gebhard's description of the parsonage on moving day, and details of the "redoing"—after long and weary waiting—will make many ministers and their families chuckle with appreciation.

Then there is the narrative of the Christmas season when baby Gwen was born and the other children were quarantined with scarlet fever. The only tree that could be procured was "a gnarled branch from one of the old lilacs set in a pot of sand," which the children decorated with gum drops. Of how morning came too early and various methods of solving the problem were tried; of the "sanctuary hours"—these are some of the experiences that are graphically portrayed by the author.

Mrs. Gebhard says that these stories are "about the marks we left on the old parsonage and on the lives of the people who came to its door. And about the marks they left on us—on the lives of the little quartette that called that doorway 'home.'"

As daughter of a minister, as well as wife of a minister and mother of four growing children, Mrs. Gebhard appreciates the true friendliness and helpfulness of the people who pass through the "Parsonage Doorway," and writes about them with love and understanding.

This book will appeal to ministers and their families, to parents, and to all those who remember their childhood, for verily "remembered joys are never past."

—Ruth B. Robinson

Guiding Force

• The United Church of Canada, predominantly a rural church with seventy per cent of its churches in rural areas, stressed the importance of the work of the rural church in the spring Rural Life and Christian Family Week issue of its official periodical, *The United Church Observer.*

Let Not Our Town be Large

Let not our town be large, remembering
That little Athens was the Muses' home,
That Oxford rules the heart of London still,
That Florence gave the Renaissance to Rome. . . .
Now let each child be joined as to a church
To her perpetual hopes, each man ordained.
Let every street be made a reverent aisle
Where Music grows and Beauty is unchained. . . .
The genius of the Maple, Elm and Oak,
The secret hidden in each grain of corn,
The glory that the prairie angels sing
At night when sons of life and love are born.

—VACHEL LINDSAY

Henry Woods McLaughlin

• Rev. Henry Woods McLaughlin, D.D., who served as Director of the Country Church Department of the Presbyterian Church, U.S., died suddenly on August 27, 1950, in Staunton, Virginia. Dr. McLaughlin was 81 years of age.

Born in 1869 in Marlinton, West Virginia, Dr. McLaughlin graduated from Hampden-Sydney College and Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary. He served in five pastorates over a period of 29 years. His last pastorate was for 16 years at the New Providence Presbyterian Church in Lexington Presbytery in Virginia. While he was pastor of that church it became the largest open country church in the denomination.

Dr. McLaughlin was elected Moderator of the Synod of Virginia in 1936.

He became Director of Country Church Work for the denomination in 1925, and served in this capacity until his retirement in 1947. He was a member of the Committee on Town and Country Church of the Home Missions Council of North America. In addition to serving as Director of Country Church Work, he also was Director of Sunday School Extension for the denomination. Between 1934 and 1947 the denomination established more than 1000 new Sunday Schools. A great many of these were inspired by his leadership in Sunday School Extension.

He was the author of numerous books on rural church work, including "The New Call," and "The Gospel in Action."

He is survived by his widow, Mrs. Nellie Swann Brown McLaughlin of Richmond, Virginia, two daughters, and six sons.

A Christmas Prayer

• Our God, who has mercifully and patiently led us through the busy year, giving us more than we have deserved or even desired, give us at this Christmas time the grace which was in Jesus Christ. Let the spirit of the little child, as it knocks today at the hearts of men, enter our life and bless it. Let duty become touched with delight, and justice be forgotten in love. Ofttimes we ask that we may not fall short of thy requirements. Today we ask for more: that obligation may be changed to opportunity and duty done with joy. Ofttimes we ask that we may walk uprightly. Today we pray for grace to bow ourselves to others' needs. Let our ears hear the cry of the needy, and our hearts feel the love of the unlovely. Give our hands strength to do small things graciously. Let our gifts today be a privilege rather than a sacrifice and let us accept kindness with humility. Heal the wounds of misunderstanding, jealousy or regret, and let the gentler air of the Christmas spirit touch our lives, as the cold of winter is touched by the gentler days of spring. As the old year ends and the new year begins, grant us peace with the world and peace in our own hearts, that those we love and those whom we may help may have sweet joy and rest. *Amen.*

"The Mennonite Community"

• *The Mennonite Community,* published monthly at Scottdale, Pa., tells how Mennonite people live, worship and work in rural communities. It is a well-illustrated periodical. We note the contents of a few recent issues.

In Arthur, Ill., the congregation, established as recently as 1906, faces the problem of finding land for a growing community. "Over one hundred and seventy unmarried young people and children are in this congregation. What will the next ten years mean in our congregation with this oncoming generation?"

A new church community has been planted in Arizona—in the "vast silent regions of the desert" at Sunnyslope. Edna Beiler went from Springs, Pa., to live in the community. In 1946, there were fifteen members and they met in a home. Now there are sixty-two members and they have a new church building.

"Point Four," or technical assistance for under-developed areas, is described by Carl Kreider. The House of Friendship, maintained by Mennonites at Kitchener, Ontario, for transients is described. Frozen foods, bread baking, etc., are not neglected.

Ruritan Auctions

• Ruritan, the rural Rotary club of the South, was organized over twenty years ago to foster better understanding between urban and rural peoples. The organization now has about 10,000 members, the state of Virginia leading with over 200 clubs.

Spring auctions are held by many Ruritan clubs which give farmers a chance to clear out barns and attics and to buy necessities for themselves and their families. A recent issue of *Business Week* featured an article about one auction which was held near Richmond, Va., last spring. To this auction about 1500 people came and spent $10,000 during the day. The profits went to children for hospitalization, glasses, summer camp and the like.